

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS, US

SUBJECT: REPORTED ROKG PUBLIC COMMENTS ON KIM SANG-KUN CASE

1. AFP AND REUTER DECEMBER 8 CARRYING STORIES OUT OF SEOUL SAYING HIGH ROKG SOURCE HAD TOLD FOREIGN PRESS REPRESENTATIVES THAT KI; SANG-KUN BEING HELD BY USG AGAINST HIS WILL. REPORTS SIMILAR TO STATEMENT WHICH INFORMATION OFFICER OF ROK EMBASSY READ TO AMERICAN REPORTER DECEMBER 8. TEXT OF STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

QUOTE THE KOREAN SIDE STRONGLY DEMANDS THE U.S. AUTHORITIES TO REINSTATE COUNSELLOR KIM SANG-KUN'S PHYSICAL FREEDOM IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PRACTICES.

THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT, THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, HAS REPEATEDLY REQUESTED THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE COUNSELLOR KIM'S PHYSICAL FREEDOM AND TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KOREAN EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE U.S. HAS SO FAR FAILED TO REPLY TO THIS REQUEST. IT
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HAS EVEN WITHHELD INFORMATION ON COUNSELLOR KIM'S PRESENT

WHEREABOUTS, AND HIS FAMILY HAS BEEN PLACED UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY AGENTS OF THE U.S. AUTHORITIES.

THE KOREAN SIDE HAS FOUND NO GROUND TO BELIEVE THAT COUNSELLOR KIM 'CHOSE TO STAY IN THE U.S. OF HIS OWN WILL,' AS ALLEGED BY THE U.S. AUTHORITIES.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE ALLEGATIONS AT THEIR FACE VALUE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE PROPOSED INTERVIEW WITH MR. KIM BY THE KOREAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT BEEN REALIZED AND EVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASCERTAIN HIS FREE WILL HAS NOT BEEN ACCORDED.

SHOULD THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES OF THE UNITED STATES FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUEST FOR A PROMPT RELEASE OF COUNSELLOR KIM, THEY WILL BE SUBJECT TO SUSPICION THAT THEY HAVE PLACED MR. KIM WITH DIPLOMATIC STATUS UNDER FORCED DETENTION, AND WILL HARDLY AVOID INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM. UNQUOTE

2. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY CAN DEVELOP ON STATEMENT AND IDENTITY ROKG OFFICIAL WHO PRESENTED IT TO PRESS IN SEOUL. ROBINSON

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